



## Sleep Out 2021 Toolkit

### KEY DATES

- Youth Gathering and Community Sleep Out (or In): **Saturday, Nov. 13, 7-9 p.m.** (in person event)
- Give to the Max Day: **Thursday, Nov. 18, all day** (statewide fundraising day – give online)
- Giving Tuesday: **Tuesday, Nov. 30, all day** (global fundraising day – give online)
- Community Conversation: **Wednesday, Dec. 15, 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.** (virtual event)
- Shop with a Purpose: **Thursday, Dec. 16 and Friday, Dec. 17** (shop in stores locally and online)

### PARTNER RESOURCES

- Interfaith and Sleep Out logos to download from our website ([click here](#))
- Video for use during sermons in Sleep Out (coming Nov. 2021)
- Testimony/story to share ([click here](#))
- Statistics and key messages (below)

### OVERVIEW

The Sleep Out is our community's annual eight-week series of events and experiences to raise awareness and \$3 million to prevent homelessness and create opportunities for everyone in our community to thrive.

For 26 years, the Sleep Out is how our community has celebrated and tapped into the power of collective compassion. It's how we continue to help each other through times of crisis and find hope for the future. Over the years, the community has helped prevent homelessness 34,912 times through rent assists.

During the global pandemic, the Interfaith food shelf delivered food through a drive-up model until it was safe to invite people back into the building.

Interfaith Outreach and the annual Sleep Out addresses the emergency needs of our neighbors and delivers services in the areas of food, housing and neighborhoods, youth and education, transportation, employment and family support. As we journey beside nearly 2,000 local families (more than 6,000 individuals), their hard work and our collective community compassion can help families and individuals stabilize, strengthen and thrive.

## THE NEED

Rising housing costs, underemployment, and lack of access to child care and healthy foods are just a few of the burdens our neighbors have faced recently. It is estimated that 14% of people living in the Interfaith Outreach eight-city service area are living in poverty (1). For a family of four, that's \$26,500, an income level that can scarcely cover even the most basic needs. Many families Interfaith worked with last year experienced the crisis of homelessness. Of these families, 46% have children, 38% live doubled up with family/friends, 19% are coming from a domestic abuse shelter, 15% sleep nightly in motels, and the remaining are unhoused — sleeping in their cars or outdoors. More families were unsheltered last year than in the previous year. One in nine Minnesotans, including one in six Minnesota kids, didn't know where their next meal would come from (2).

- **Lack of food is often the entry point to Interfaith services:** For many of those who come to Interfaith for the first time, lack of food is their presenting need. As clients work with Interfaith, we discover underlying needs such as lack of affordable housing or jobs that don't pay a living wage.
- **The impact of COVID-19 is unprecedented:** Individuals and families living in poverty will feel the effects of the global pandemic for years more profoundly than others. The barriers they face can be devastating as they work diligently to rise up and address their ever-changing needs.
- **Affordable housing is nearly impossible to find:** Housing is considered affordable when a family pays 30% of their income or less for a home (3). Most families who work with Interfaith Outreach are housing "cost-burdened," meaning they spend more than 30% for their home. On average, Interfaith clients without housing subsidies are paying more than half of their income for housing. When heat, electricity and other bills are added, the strain on family budgets is even greater.
- **Underemployment, child care and housing are intersecting challenges:** Securing and maintaining a job without access to affordable child care or stable housing is nearly impossible. Most who are working have jobs that don't provide a living wage. They need to build skills and gain credentials to increase their earning potential - work that is out of reach when time and energy must be focused on maintaining basic needs.

## THE RESPONSE

Fortunately, Interfaith Outreach has responded, and continues to respond, to the needs of our community and help people not only stabilize post-pandemic, but eventually *thrive*.

- Over the years, the community has helped prevent homelessness 34,912 times through rent assists. Interfaith supporters have helped to keep people in their homes, preventing homelessness 631 times last year alone.
- The Cranberry Ridge housing development (in partnership with Beacon Housing Collaborative) is set to open in 2022, providing 45 apartments for families who earn less than \$52,000 a year for a family of four. Twelve of the homes will be for families who make less than \$31,000 a year for a family of four. Location: 18220 Highway 55 in Plymouth.
- Last year 937 families received case management services and were linked with resources that resolved an immediate need and provided a plan for moving forward.

- The Interfaith Employment Services team addresses work readiness barriers to build skills, develop and implement job search plans, secure and retain employment, and advance to secure living wages.
- Last year 216 kids age 0-5, the highest number ever, received full- or part-time scholarships for quality early learning opportunities (child care and preschool).
- Last year more than 235 sponsors helped 2,702 individuals have a more hopeful holiday celebration through Interfaith's Holiday Gift Program.
- This year the food shelf was converted to a SuperShelf, offering even more guest-centered food options and healthy, culturally-focused food items. We are one of only 25 food shelves in the state to earn this SuperShelf status.

#### **WAYS THE COMMUNITY CAN HELP**

- [Make a donation](#)
- [Create a fundraiser](#)
- [Sleep Out \(or In\)](#)
- [Plant a Yard sign](#)
- [Volunteer](#) (Resale Select and food shelf are areas of greatest need)

#### **WHAT SUPPORTER DOLLARS CAN DO**

- *\$3,000 is what it costs to provide services to stabilize and strengthen a family for one year*
- *\$1,200 is what it costs to prevent homelessness with rent assistance to keep a family of four in their housing for a month*
- *\$400 is what it costs to provide utility payment assistance that keeps the lights and other utilities on*
- *\$250 is what it costs to provide a laptop for an adult to access education/training or do their jobs remotely*
- *\$100 is what it costs to provide a food shelf visit for a family of two*

#### **FOOTNOTES**

(1) Wilder Research

(2) Second Harvest Heartland

(3) Department of Health and Human Services